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ABSTRACT

The central thesis of this book is that the developmental conception of democracy provides the theoretical foundation for an alternative model of school governance devoted not to efficient integration of students into a hierarchical labor force, but to development as unique human beings. This will necessitate an organizational structure that involves teachers directly in the formation of educational policy. Parental involvement is critical, and leadership must be conceived of in terms of guidance. The community must be involved, and students themselves, at least at the high school level, must become involved in governance. School-based management is vital in urban areas where participative decision making offers hope for restructuring. The experiences of Chicago (Illinois) with school reform and those of Saint Louis (Missouri) and Dade County (Florida) provide examples of school-based management and community empowerment as they are being enacted in urban schools. This approach represents a significant departure from traditional bureaucracy, but its shortcomings center on favoring either community empowerment or professionalization, one at the expense of the other, and retention of control by existing higher structures. Real democracy in education, based on constitutional choice, promises great hope for education in the entire country. Contains 125 references. (SLD)

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